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Triathlon Race Organisers Group (TROG)

Jane Hunt
jhunt@bond.edu.au

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8 September 1992

TO: ALL TA BOARD MEMBERS
    ALL STATE/TERRITORY ASSOCIATIONS

FROM: PRESIDENT TRIATHLON NSW

TRIATHLON RACE ORGANISERS GROUP (TROG)

On Sunday 30 August 1992, I attended a meeting organised by prominent race directors to discuss common interests and concerns held by race directors. My attendance resulted from my involvement with Wollongong Triathlon, however I expressed personal views at the meeting based on my commitment to triathlon administration, rather than a race directors. My views were welcomed and respected.

The meeting resolved to form a committee named TRIATHLON RACE ORGANISERS GROUP.

At the request of Alan Mitchell, I have attached the minutes of the meeting for your information.

The meeting was constructive and I believe the race directors and the sport generally will benefit from the formation of TROG.

Those present at the meeting stated that they did not wish to operate, or be perceived as, a “Rebel” group trying to take over Triathlon and Triathlon administration. Page 5 of the minutes lists the aims of the committee, which I believe confines the committee to a legitimate and constructive role within Triathlon.

A steering committee was established which will communicate with and survey all race directors in the country, with the view to establishing support for TROG and if necessary, reviewing its aims. An executive committee will be formed in due course.

I would be happy to discuss with you further details of the meeting. Please telephone 042-284480(AH) 042-277034 (BH).

Regards

Stephen Ray

Attach.
MINUTES OF MEETING OF RACE DIRECTORS HELD AT THE OFFICES OF TRIATHLON SPORTS PTY.LTD. ON SUNDAY 30TH AUGUST, 1992

PRESENT:
Barry Voevodin - Co-Race Director
Julie Voevodin - Co-Race Director
Anthony Marchesani - Event/Sport Marketing
Royce Fairbrother - Race Director
Mark Roberts - Event/Sport Management
David Hansen - Race Director
Ken Uren - Race Director
Fred Allsopp - Race Director
Bob Southwell - Age Group Competitor
Ian Hopper - MHM Austn. Sports Insurance Brokers
Lisa Faulkner - 5 Star Sports Promotion
Stephen Ray - President Triathlon NSW
Garth Prowd - Race Organiser
Marc Dragan - Professional Athlete
Owen Kreillis - Race Director
Malcolm Wells - Devonport Triathlon Committee
Alan Mitchell - Series Director

John Burt opened the meeting, the purpose of which was to determine if an Association of Race Directors should be formed. John Burt was then asked to chair the meeting.

The Chairman stated that this was not a forum to air previous grievances and that a Race Director is one of the three major components in the sport.

Barry Voevodin said that the aims and objectives were basically to bring together a group of individuals with a common interest who would work together for the betterment of the sport, and that if formed, it was not to be seen as a rebel group. In his opinion, Race Directors do not communicate between themselves and that event organisers of Professional and Age Group triathlons need a platform, or Association, to put forward their side, which has not been done in the past.

The Chairman asked that each person briefly express their feelings as to what they think the sport needs.

Alan Mitchell: It is vital that a race directors' organiser be formed. He had asked 4 members of the community what they see of the sport of triathlon today, and what is its future. These were Alex Hamill of George Patterson Advertising; Graeme Hannan of IMG, Andy Pascaleidis of SBS and Warren Sim of Channel 7 Sport. **Copies of their comments form an annexure to these minutes**

Barry Voevodin: spoke of the dropping of Greg Welch from the Worlds Team because of his reluctance to wear the adidas team uniform when his major sponsor is Saucony, and asked why should an athlete, who is sponsored 52 weeks of a year, be forced to promote another sponsors product, and maybe jeopardise his position with existing sponsor.

John Burt: replied, stating that he was on committee when adidas was chosen because they submitted the best uniform and that they also offered to provide uniforms for the
Senior and Junior teams and for the Management free of charge.

Anthony Marchesani: We were here to discuss fees for events, what we receive for these fees and the insurance position.

Royce Fairbrother: asked what would be achieved by forming an association, the answer to which was that at present race directors and promoters have no say or input to Triathlon Australia, and as an important part of the running of the sport, they should have such a right.

Mark Roberts: The sport obviously had a current burden due to poor communication.

Dave Hansen: While there was a need to do something, his major concern was that nothing is done to harm the current structure which was in place and destroy the 7 years of hard work required to get to this stage.

Ken Uren: wants the sport to progress and for Race Directors to have a voice in Triathlon Australia.

Fred Allsopp: would like some representation on Triathlon Australia for Race Directors, but that the meeting must also not lose sight of the average triathlete.

Bob Southwell: Age group competitors don't have the pressure which the professionals have and therefore seem to enjoy their participation in the sport much more. For them it all boils down to 'what do you get for your entry fee - do you get value for your money'. If the average athlete gets a well conducted, safe race then he goes away happy. If not, then they can choose not to compete again in that particular event.

Marc Dragan: Does not think age group competitors are happy with the current set-up, nor are the professionals and that there should be no distinction between the way in which the two groups are treated. Most professionals will probably go to either the United States or Europe to base themselves as they are being looked after much better in those countries. We must have figureheads, both professionals and age groupers, to promote the sport. In his opinion Triathlon Australia and the Race Directors seem to be working against each other. Our clubs need to be informed of what is happening, but unfortunately the information doesn't seem to filter down. Every athlete must be a member of the association.

Ian Hopper: MHM and Australian Sports Brokers make it quite clear that their continued involvement with triathlon would depend on changes being made.

Lisa Faulkner: Another body is a good thing as long as it works with the existing formed bodies. The aim of all concerned should be to look for sponsorship and media coverage, not just for professionals, but also for age groupers.

Steve Ray: Welcomes the formation of an association of professional Race Directors and for them to establish a code of ethics and to increase the standard of events. He would like to nurture the young people into the sport and would like to concentrate on them.

Garth Prowd: If we could get some form of consensus with Triathlon Australia then we could support each other, which would be a big step forward.

A vote was taken on whether it was wise to form an association of Race Directors. Yes - Unanimous. The name chosen is Triathlon Race Organisers Group (TROG)

Each person in turn was then asked to express one word which they felt would be the primary aim of TROG, these being:

ECONOMY, EQUALITY, CONSISTENCY, UNITY, STANDARDS, NON-POLITICAL, and 6 persons expressing COMMUNICATION.

ONE DAY LICENCES/PERMITS

Barry Voevodin stated that the recent court case between TA and Tri-Sports, and the
The proposal of establishing a one day licence had prompted this meeting to be convened. To impose a levy on competitors is not right, nor is the reason given that it is for insurance. It is making it more expensive for competitors and putting up more barriers. Also the fact that the rules of triathlon differ from state to state (while other sports have universal national rules). It has been suggested that the fee for this ‘one day permit’ would be $6 out of which only $2 is for insurance. What is the other $4 for? TA should not use Race Directors as a source of earning extra income in what is an obvious effort to meet their current debt. If TA says it is because funds are needed to develop training clinics and school based programmes, then this cannot be true. TA has been in existence for 7 years and there is no evidence at present of this having been done in those years. There are too many ‘ifs’. Should we make it too difficult for newcomers to start, then they will be lost to the sport. He quoted the Corporate triathlon he conducts and said that of the 700 competitors, 650 would be newcomers who would not wear an extra $6 levy - they just want to race. He believes that TA and the state associations should say why this levy should be imposed, and justify the extra $4 being charged over the insurance costs.

Ian Hopper: MHM would like to see a compulsory membership registration for all competitors and explained the current insurance arrangement with TA. From the sanctioning fees paid by Race Directors, $60 goes to his company for public liability insurance on the race. The basis of the fee is to make it as easy as possible for Race Directors, and for membership of triathletes to increase. They feel that personal insurance is not the concern of Race Directors. It is up to individual athletes to have their own insurance. If the proposed levy of $6 is charged, then under the current law, athletes must be advised how much of that is being used for insurance costs. Athletes who are licensed with their state association are automatically covered for Personal Liability Insurance (PLI) and for Personal Accident (PAI).

The proposed $6 levy will only cover the officials for PLI NOT the athletes. It is much better to have every athlete become licensed. MHM had already advised TA they did not think the proposed ‘one day licence’ would work and had put forward an alternative proposal. In answer to a question from Garth Prowd, Ian advised that of the $1450 sanction fee paid for the Noosa Triathlon, only $60 is for insurance - the rest is for revenue - and that insurance is only PLI for the Race Director and officials.

He cited the instance in a Milo Junior Triathlon event when a young girl's bike got out of control and crashed into a parked vehicle. The competitor had no insurance - the organisers insurance did not cover the accident (ruled on the basis that they had no part in her bike getting out of control) and the young lady's parents were responsible for the bill for repairs totalling in excess of $5000.

MHM lean towards compulsory licences to be a benefit to TA, Race Directors and individual members. The company had put forward a proposal to TA in July of this year and were still waiting for a reply. It was prepared to waive any costing to High Schools and have a day licence for individual juniors. There is a moral obligation to look after kids if anything happens to them during an event. A fee of $40 for these events would include PLI and some coverage to the juniors involved.

They also suggest the best way to get growth in the membership was to reduce the registration fee - say to $20 - with $10 for insurance, $8 to the Triathlon Assn. and $2 to Race Directors and then to reduce the sanctioning fee to races.

To increase the Race Directors insurance to include PLI for every competitor, MHM would produce a brochure and provide to Race Directors to be handed out to every
competitor when they register - it would then be up to the individual to look to his insurance cover. They also offer a travel insurance for $100,000 overseas medical cover for $50.

There is the added benefit of being insured for being registered. The brochure they are prepared to provide would increase the awareness of the need for insurance, and also obviously increase the registration of new members.

At this stage Steve Ray stated that, as President of Triathlon NSW, this was the first he had heard of the proposal by MHM. Ian Hopper advised that the proposal was sent in early July to Phil Rhoden, Geoff Frost and John Ison.

Ian further pointed out that there is a grey area in liability for competitors who are not registered association members and therefore uninsured.

MHM could also provide day insurance cover to the likes of MSM's Corporate triathlon.

Anthony Marchesani: The current insurance policy does not cover training by individuals. His company (Tri-Sports Promotions) believes insurance is something we all must have and would like their athletes to be insured.

The meeting agreed that insurance should be a separate component from registration and that it should be sold as a separate product. That the one day licence is being put on purely to raise funds to pay TA's debt because of the recent court case. It is unacceptable and if pushed through by TA, the whole sport will rebel.

DECISION

Meeting voted that TROG tell TA they do not want it and that we wish to sit down with them to discuss the whole issue of insurance, and that the behaviour of TA in this matter is totally unacceptable.

SPONSORSHIP

The meeting was advised that TA are about to sign a contract with Cadburys for a 9 year period at $70,000 per year to be adjusted annually by the CPI. There are some moves within the association to stop this signing as it is felt the sport can get more substantial sponsorship.

STEERING COMMITTEE

At this stage nominations were called to form a steering committee for TROG and those nominated were: Royce Fairbrother, John Holt, Mark Pringle, Barry Voevodin, Garth Prowd, Mark Roberts, Ken Murray, Anthony Marchesani, Steve Ray and Alan Mitchell.

The feeling was expressed that in the past no-one has worked together (for whatever reasons). We have now come together on common ground and that a group such as TROG can ask for and demand answers from TA. In the past there has been little, if no, communication from TA whatsoever and that includes to members of its own Board of Directors. TROG will demand communication from TA to State associations and this newly formed association. The sport has to flourish and while we fully realise that the sport has to have administration and that we have to give financial support to that administration, it should also be accountable for its administration.

FIRST TASK TO BE ADDRESSED.

Each State Association and TA are to be notified that TROG has been formed and that a discussion paper will be circulated and results assessed. They are also to be forwarded copies of the minutes of this meeting.

AIMS

A prime aim is for TROG and the TA administration to work together in future years for the betterment of the sport and to ultimately merge as one.

As funding from the ASC is based on registered members, this group (TROG) has a
data base of their competitors which could be pooled and which would number far more than those registered with TA.

As levies and sanction fees don't provide any safety component for competitors, TROG could source its own insurance to offer to Race Directors. For betterment of sport TROG would like to see insurance available to competitors, offer it to them and advise where they can purchase it. It worries us that they have no insurance, but it is their responsibility.

The perception of TROG is that TA does not represent Race Directors nor competitors and that one of the first essentials is to get COMMUNICATION going by sending copies of these minutes to all Race Directors for their comments.

The present Schools Championships are costly and a project to be looked at is staging these at individual school centres on time basis. It is possible that on a given day, schools all over Australia could run heats using local pools for the swim, wind trainers for the cycle and a 400m run on a track. All to be done on times over identical distances - finalists chosen who would then compete in the Championship at one venue. The use of wind trainers would mean more could participate as they would not have to bear the cost of purchasing a competitive bike.

Minutes of this meeting to be forwarded to all members of the Board of TA.

Race Directors to look at who they would like to be represented by as President, Vice President and board members on TA.

The aim of TROG is to get back to state association to ask that they consider who they wish to nominate for the AGM of TA and to ask that they ensure each state send their delegates to the AGM of TA to vote personally as directed, and NOT to vote by proxy.

The state associations of Northern Territory, South Australia, Tasmania and Western Australia to be contacted asking that they send their delegates to AGM of TA.

It was suggested that TROG look at the legal aspects of changing the national governing body set-up by wiping out the company which has the debt and forming a new one. John Burt said he would not like to see this happen and it could damage the credibility of the sport of triathlon.

OTHER AIMS

TROG to have a profile by being involved in the administration of the sport.

Database of competitors to be created by utilizing all current data used by Race Directors.

Insurance problem to be solved.

A 'Fair Dinkum' Race Calendar be established for all Race Directors to have access to a reference.

Promotion of the sport.

Undertaking for open communication between members of TROG.

Safety.

Improving communications to the grass roots of the sport through a page in Triathlon Sports Magazine.

Standardisation of rules because they can affect insurance.

Standardisation of sanction fees for all states.

Representation on TA Board and other major bodies.

Move towards adopting ITU rules.

END